DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 767 EC 211 046

TITLE A Child's Guide to Seizure Disorders.
INSTITUTION Epilepsy Foundation of America, Landover, MD.
REPORT NO 078-787-CGS
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 7p.; For related documents, see EC 211 045-047.
AVAILABLE FROM Epilepsy Foundation of America, 4351 Garden City Dr., Landover, MD 20785.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Drug Therapy; *Epilepsy; Neurology; Safety Education; *Seizures; *Self Care Skills

ABSTRACT

Intended for young children suffering from seizure disorders, the booklet explains what a seizure disorder is, encourages the asking of questions, provides a simple explanation of how seizures happen and what effects they have, describes various kinds of seizures, and stresses the importance of taking prescribed medication regularly. Also stressed are first aid measures a child can take if he sees another child having a seizure. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED299767

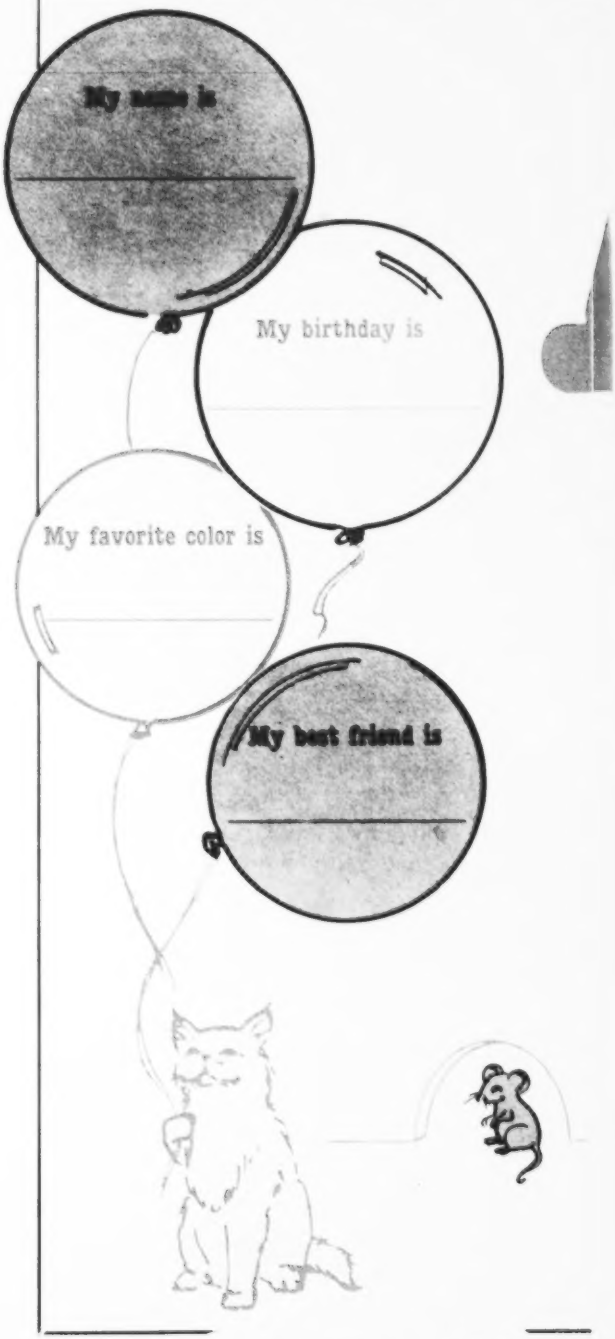
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

A CHILD'S GUIDE to



"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ann Scherer

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EC 211046

seizure disorder is a kind of illness that only happens sometimes.

It's not the kind of illness that makes you feel sick inside.

It's not the kind of illness that makes you cough and sneeze.

It's not the kind of illness that means you have to stay in bed and have your temperature taken.

A child who has a seizure disorder feels just as healthy as everyone else most of the time. But sometimes he may have a seizure. This booklet is all about seizures.

Another name for this kind of illness is epilepsy (ep-i-lep-sy).

If you have epilepsy, it's good to find out as much as you can about it.

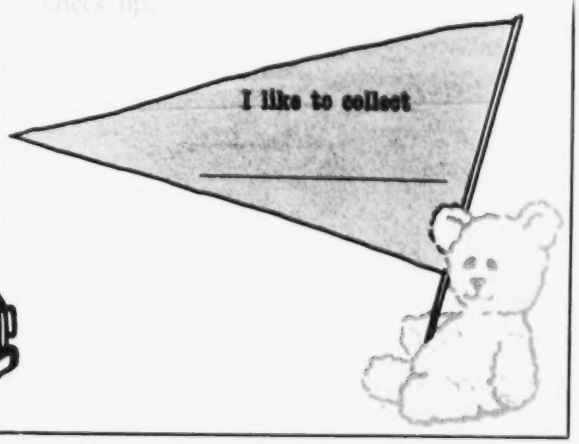
You'll know how your seizures happen.

You'll know how your medicine works and why you have to take it every day.

Then you can tell other boys and girls who might want to know.

If there's something in this booklet that you don't understand, ask your mother or dad to explain it to you.

If you have a special question about your seizure disorder, ask your doctor about it when you go for your next check-up.



How Seizures Happen

Seizures begin in the wonderful network of cells in your brain.

These cells are very, very small, but they make everything in your brain and body work.

They do it by sending little signals to each other, faster than you can imagine.

The signals flash all over your body so you can run and jump and do all the things you do every minute of every day.

Your brain cells are even hard at work while the rest of you is asleep.

Most of the time your brain cells work just the way they're supposed to work. You don't have to think about them. They just keep doing what they're supposed to do.

But if you have a seizure disorder it means that sometimes, for a very short time, they don't work quite the way they should.

For just a few seconds, or a minute or two, some of your brain cells send mixed up signals.

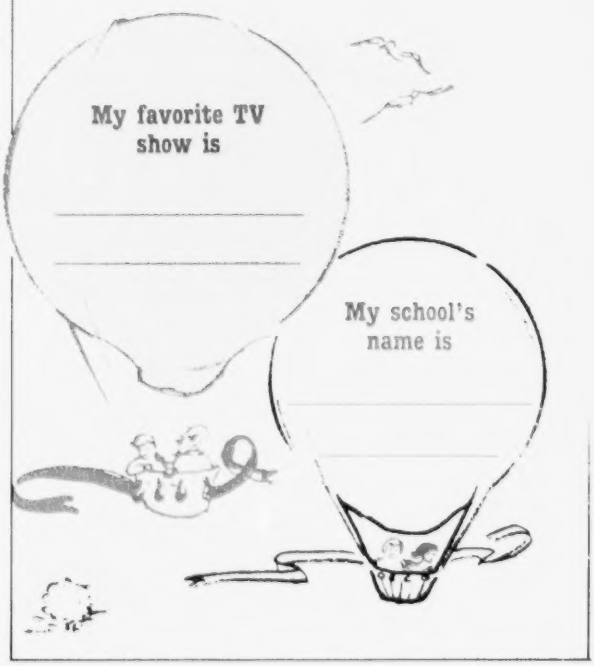
They stop the other cells from working properly, and your body gets mixed up messages.

- This could make your arm shake without you wanting it to shake.
- It could make things look, or sound, or feel strange to you—just for a moment.
- It could even make you stop and stare for a moment or two.

Sometimes those mixed up messages from your brain can make your whole body work in a mixed up way.

- They could make you fall down, get stiff, and then shake all over for a minute or two.
- They could make you move around as if you were half asleep.

All these changes in things you feel or do are called seizures.



Your Seizures

There are lots of different kinds of seizures. Not everyone has the same kind.

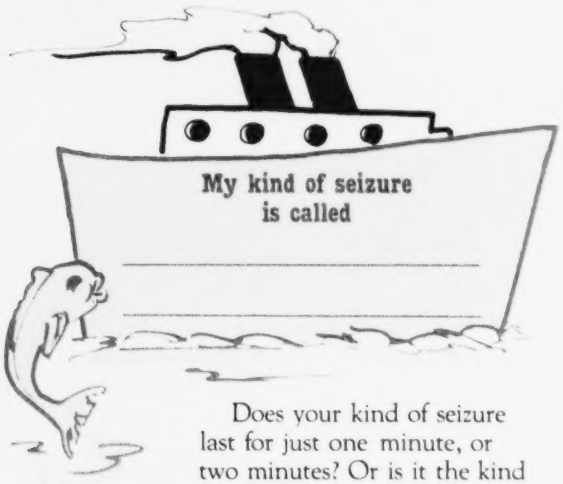
Go back and read where the colored dots are.

Do you see the kind of seizure you have?

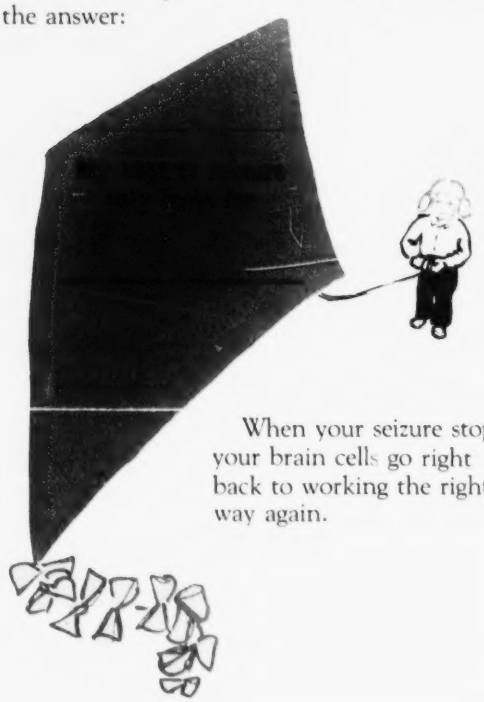
Or do you have a different kind altogether?

If you're not sure, ask your mother or dad.

Your kind of seizure will have a special name. Ask your doctor the special name for your kind of seizure and write it here:



Does your kind of seizure last for just one minute, or two minutes? Or is it the kind that is over in just a few seconds? Write in the answer:



When your seizure stops your brain cells go right back to working the right way again.

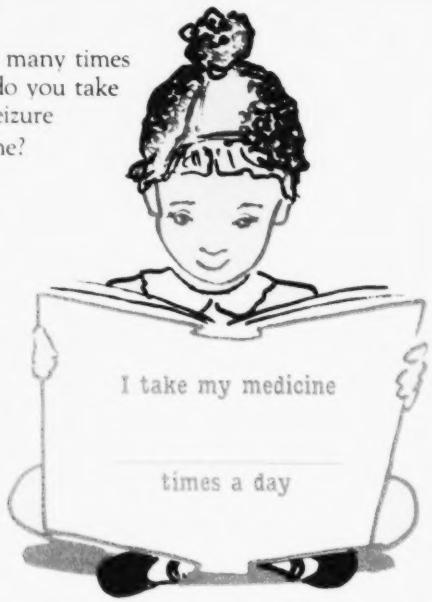
Your Medicine

When you have epilepsy and you have seizures, your doctor will give you medicine to take.

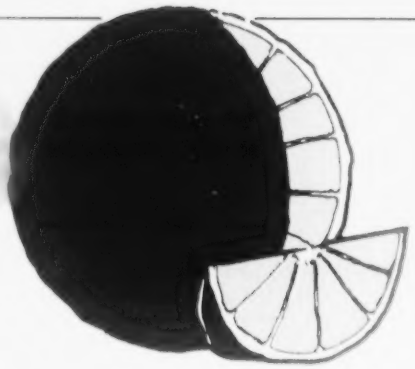
Your doctor will tell you how many times a day to take it.

He may say to take it once a day, or twice a day, or three times a day, or four times a day.

How many times a day do you take your seizure medicine?



Your doctor may change your medicine sometimes if he thinks another medicine will

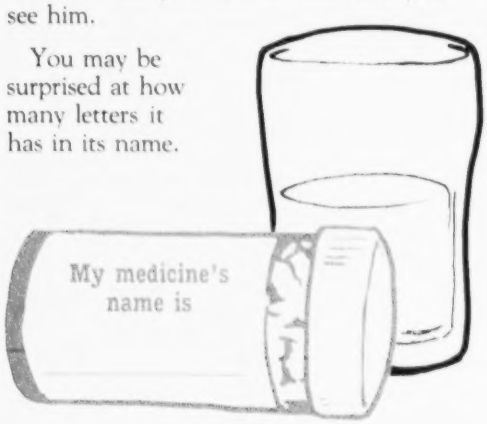


work better. He will keep trying to find the very best medicine to stop the kind of seizures you have.

Your medicine has a special name. Do you know the name of your medicine?

Ask at the drug store the next time your prescription is filled what your medicine is called, or ask your doctor next time you see him.

You may be surprised at how many letters it has in its name.



The medicine you take makes it much harder for a seizure to get started. It may do such a good job that you don't have any seizures at all.

It is important to take seizure medicine at the same time every day.

You have to keep taking it because you want to stop seizures from happening every day, not just some days.

Your body uses up the medicine you take just like a car uses up gasoline.

When you take your pills you are putting back into your body the medicine that got used up since the last time you took it.

Taking more pills won't work. Fewer pills won't work. What your doctor has said you should take will do the best job for you.

What times do you take your medicine? Circle the times on the clock face.

First Aid

Do you know what to do if you ever see a child have a falling down and shaking seizure?

This is what you should do:

Move things out of the way.

Tell the other children not to be scared.

Send someone to find a grown-up.

Put something soft under the child's head if he's lying on the floor. Turn him on his side.

Be a friend when he wakes up.

That's all you have to do.

And that's all your friends have to do if you have this kind of seizure.

5.

Things to Remember

- Epilepsy is not catching. You cannot possibly get it from someone else. And no one else can get it from you.

- Epilepsy did not happen to you because of anything bad that you did, or that anyone in your family did. No one made you have it. It just happened.

- You cannot hurt anyone during a seizure.

- Seeing something that is not there, or hearing a funny noise that no one else hears or doing something when you seem to be half asleep doesn't mean you are crazy. These things are caused by little seizures that other people can't see.

- Having seizures doesn't mean you are any less smart or intelligent than other people. It doesn't mean you will get less intelligent, either.

- You cannot swallow your tongue during any kind of seizure. It is fastened to the bottom of your mouth.

- You should not put anything in the mouth of a person having a seizure. It may hurt his teeth or his jaw.

- Living a normal, active life, playing sports and having a good time will not make you have more seizures.

If you have epilepsy, remember that it is just a part of your life—a few seconds or a few minutes out of all the interesting things you see and do.

And the more things you do, the less important epilepsy will seem to be.

Remember, too, that you are not alone.

Thousands of grown ups had seizures when they were young and now have children of their own, work at interesting jobs, and live happy lives.

And **you** will, too!

Note to parents: This pamphlet is designed to help the average child understand and adjust to seizure disorders. It does not give medical advice and your child's doctor is always the best guide for **your** *child's treatment and level of activity. For other materials on epilepsy, contact the Epilepsy Foundation of America at 3451 Garden City Drive, Landover, MD 20895 or your local Foundation affiliate.*

3451 Garden City Drive • Landover, MD 20785

Produced with a grant from Ayerst Laboratories